

## **Request Proposal**

### **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Communication Plan**

Student and Family Services

Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
400 E 14<sup>th</sup> St  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Due Date: June 27, 2008

# **RFP ED-SM13501**

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## **Section 1    Introduction**

### **1.1    Purpose**

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified service providers to contract for services for the Iowa Department of Education's Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Communication Plan. The Iowa Department of Education intends to award a contract beginning on with an overall completion date of March 15, 2009 .

### **1.2    Definitions and Acronyms**

DE: Iowa Department of Education

AIM: Accessible Instructional Materials

AT: Assistive Technology

NIMAS: National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards

UDL: Universal Design for Learning

AEA: Area Education Agency

LEA: Local Education Agency

IEP: Individual Education Plan

### **1.3    Background Information**

This RFP is designed to provide vendors with the information necessary for the preparation of competitive bid proposals. The RFP process is for the Department's benefit and is intended to provide the Department with competitive information to assist in the selection process. It is not intended to be comprehensive. Each vendor is responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive bid proposal.

The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) included a requirement that students who are visually impaired and students who are print disabled receive their textbooks and core instructional materials in specialized formats at the same time as their non-disabled peers.

The 2006 regulations implementing the 2004 IDEA include directions on how states and local districts are to respond to this legislation. The two sections of this legislation are the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center (NIMAC). Providing accessible formats in a

timely manner is not a new requirement. The new NIMAS process will improve this process for the students covered under these regulations.

The NIMAS establishes standards to be used by textbook publishers to prepare electronic files of textbooks, which can be converted to specialized formats. Specialized formats means Braille, Audio, Large Print, Text to Speech or Digital Text, which can be used by students who are blind, vision impaired, physically disabled, and reading disabled. The NIMAC's duties are to receive and maintain a catalog of these electronic files. Publishers at the direction of local school districts send these files to NIMAC. When a student in a local school district requires one of these specialized formats to have access to the general education curriculum, the local district will contact an Authorized User designated by the State of Iowa to search the NIMAC for the particular textbook and associated materials. The Authorized User can access the electronic file and convert it into the specialized format requested or identify an Accessible Media Producer to convert the file into the specialized format. Once the specialized format has been converted, the Authorized User will send it to the local district making the initial request.

For further information, consult the websites below:

<http://nimas.cast.org/>

<http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/572/1063/>

<http://www.cast.org/>

## **Section 2    Administrative Information**

### **2.1    Issuing Officer**

The Issuing Officer, identified below, is the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance until selection of the successful vendor.

Steve Maurer, Consultant  
IA Department of Education  
Student and Family Services  
Grimes State Office Bldg  
400 E 14<sup>th</sup> St  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

### **2.2    Restriction on Communication**

From the issue date of this RFP until announcement of the successful vendor, vendors may contact only the Issuing Officer. The Issuing Officer will respond only to questions regarding the procurement process. Vendors may be disqualified if they contact any state employee other than the issuing officer.

Questions will be submitted and responded to through email to Steve.Maurer@iowa.gov. The deadline for submitting questions is June 13, 2008, by 4:30 p.m. Questions will be responded to by June 16, 2008.

### **2.3    Downloading the RFP from the Internet**

All amendments will be posted on the Department's home page at **[www.iowa.gov/educate/content/category/15/47/366/](http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/category/15/47/366/)**. The vendor is advised to check the Department's home page periodically for amendments to this RFP, particularly if the vendor downloaded the RFP from the Internet as the vendor may not automatically receive amendments. If the vendor received this RFP as a result of a written request to the Department, the vendor will automatically receive amendments.

### **2.4    Procurement Timetable**

The following dates are set forth for informational and planning purposes; however, the Agency reserves the right to change the dates.

Issue RFP: May 16, 2008

Cut-off date for questions: June 13, 2008

Questions and answers sent to all vendors: June 16, 2008

Closing date for all applications: June 27, 2008

Evaluation committee complete review and score all applications: July 11, 2008

Announce Successful Vendor: July 14, 2008

Completion of Contract Negotiations and  
Execution of the Contract: August 1, 2008

Start Contract: August 15, 2008

End Contract: March 15, 2009

## **2.5 Questions, Requests for Clarification, and Suggested Changes**

Vendors are invited to submit written questions and requests for clarifications regarding the RFP. Vendors may also submit suggestions for changes to the requirements of this RFP. The questions, requests for clarifications, or suggestions must be in writing and received by the Issuing Officer before 4:30 p.m., central time, June 13, 2008. Oral questions will not be permitted. If the questions, requests for clarifications, or suggestions pertain to a specific section of the RFP, the page and section number(s) must be referenced. Written responses to questions, requests for clarifications, or suggestions will be sent on or before June 16, 2008 to vendors who received RFP's. The Agency's written responses will be considered part of the RFP. If the Agency decides to adopt a suggestion, the Agency will issue an amendment to the RFP. Questions, requests for clarification and suggestions should be sent to the Issuing Officer at the address listed above or by e-mail to [Steve.Maurer@iowa.gov](mailto:Steve.Maurer@iowa.gov).

The Agency assumes no responsibility for verbal representations made by its officers or employees unless such representations are confirmed in writing and incorporated into the RFP.

## **2.6 Amendment to the RFP and Bid Proposal and Withdrawal of Bid Proposal**

The Department reserves the right to amend the RFP at any time. The vendor shall acknowledge receipt of an amendment in its proposal. If the amendment occurs after the closing date for receipt of bid proposals, the Department may, in

its sole discretion, allow vendors to amend their bid proposals in response to the Department's amendment if necessary.

The vendor may amend its bid proposal. The amendment must be in writing, signed by the vendor and received by time set for the receipt of proposals.

Electronic mail amendments will be accepted.

Vendors who submit proposals in advance of the deadline may withdraw, modify, and resubmit proposals at any time prior to the deadline for submitting proposals. Vendors must notify the Issuing Officer through email if they wish to withdraw their proposals.

## **2.7 Submission of Bid Proposals**

The Department must receive the bid proposal at Steve.Maurer@iowa.gov., Friday, June 27, 2008, no later than 4:30 p.m. **This is a mandatory requirement and will not be waived by the Department. Any bid proposal received after this deadline will be rejected and returned unopened to the vendor.**

Vendors must furnish all information necessary to evaluate the bid proposal. Bid proposals that fail to meet the mandatory requirements of the RFP will be disqualified. Verbal information provided by the vendor shall not be considered part of the vendor's proposal.

## **2.8 Bid Proposal Opening**

The Department will open bid proposals on June 30, 2008. The bid proposals will remain confidential until the review all of the bid proposals submitted in response to this RFP and the Department has announced a notice of intent to award a contract. See Iowa Code Section 72.3.

## **2.9 Costs of Preparing the Bid Proposal**

The costs of preparation and delivery of the bid proposal are solely the responsibility of the vendor.

## **2.10 Rejection of Bid Proposals**

The Department reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, in whole and in part, received in response to this RFP at any time prior to the execution of a written contract. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Department to award a contract. This RFP is designed to provide vendors with the information necessary to prepare a competitive bid proposal. This RFP process is for the Department's benefit and is intended to provide the Department with competitive information to assist in the selection of a vendor to provide services. It is not intended to be comprehensive and each vendor is



responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive bid proposal.

## **2.11 Disqualification**

The Department shall reject outright and shall not evaluate proposals for any one of the following reasons:

- 2.11.1** The vendor fails to deliver the bid proposal by the due date and time.
- 2.11.2** The vendor states that a service requirement cannot be met.
- 2.11.3** The vendor's response materially changes a service requirement.
- 2.11.4** The vendor's response limits the rights of the Department.
- 2.11.5** The vendor fails to include information necessary to substantiate that it will be able to meet a service requirement. A response of "will comply" or merely repeating the requirement is not sufficient. Responses must indicate present capability; representations that future developments will satisfy the requirement are not sufficient.
- 2.11.6** The vendor fails to respond to the Department's request for information, documents, or references.
- 2.11.7** The vendor fails to include any signature, certification, authorization, stipulation, disclosure or guarantee requested in section 4 of this RFP.
- 2.11.8** The vendor initiates unauthorized contact regarding the RFP with state employees.
- 2.11.9** The vendor provides misleading or inaccurate responses.

## **2.10 Nonmaterial and Material Variances**

The Department reserves the right to waive or permit cure of nonmaterial variances in the bid proposal if, in the judgment of the Department, it is in the Department's best interest to do so. Nonmaterial variances include minor informalities that do not affect responsiveness; that are merely a matter of form or format; that do not change the relative standing or otherwise prejudice other vendors; that do not change the meaning or scope of the RFP; or that do not reflect a material change in the services. In the event the Department waives or permits cure of nonmaterial variances, such waiver or cure will not modify the RFP requirements or excuse the vendor from full compliance with RFP specifications or other contract requirements if the vendor is awarded the contract. The determination of materiality is in the sole discretion of the Department.

## **2.11 Reference Checks**

The Department reserves the right to contact any reference to assist in the evaluation of the bid proposal, to verify information contained in the bid proposal

and to discuss the vendor's qualifications and the qualifications of any subcontractor identified in the bid proposal.

## **2.12 Information from Other Sources**

The Department reserves the right to obtain and consider information from other sources concerning a vendor, such as the vendor's capability and performance under other contracts.

## **2.13 Verification of Bid Proposal Contents**

The content of a bid proposal submitted by a vendor is subject to verification. Misleading or inaccurate responses shall result in disqualification.

## **2.14 Bid Proposal Clarification Process**

The Department reserves the right to contact a vendor after the submission of bid proposals for the purpose of clarifying a bid proposal to ensure mutual understanding. This contact may include written questions, interviews, site visits, a review of past performance if the vendor has provided goods or services to the Department or any other political subdivision wherever located, or requests for corrective pages in the vendor's bid proposal. The Department will not consider information received if the information materially alters the content of the bid proposal or alters the type of goods and services the vendor is offering to the Department. An individual authorized to legally bind the vendor shall sign responses to any request for clarification. Responses shall be submitted to the Department within the time specified in the Department's request. Failure to comply with requests for additional information may result in rejection of the bid proposal as non-compliant.

## **2.15 Disposition of Bid Proposals**

All proposals become the property of the Department and shall not be returned to the vendor unless all bid proposals are rejected or the RFP is cancelled. In either event, vendors will be asked to send prepaid shipping instruments to the Department for return of the bid proposals submitted. In the event the Department does not receive shipping instruments, the Department will destroy the bid proposals. Otherwise, at the conclusion of the selection process, the contents of all bid proposals will be in the public domain and be open to inspection by interested parties subject to exceptions provided in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other applicable law.

## **2.16 Public Records and Requests for Confidential Treatment**

The Department may treat all information submitted by a vendor as public information following the conclusion of the selection process unless the vendor

properly requests that information be treated as confidential at the time of submitting the bid proposal. The Department's release of information is governed by Iowa Code chapter 22. Vendors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with chapter 22 before submitting a proposal. The Department will copy public records as required to comply with the public records laws.

Any request for confidential treatment of information must be included in the transmittal letter with the vendor's bid proposal. In addition, the vendor must enumerate the specific grounds in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other applicable law which support treatment of the material as confidential and explain why disclosure is not in the best interest of the public. The request for confidential treatment of information must also include the name, address, and telephone number of the person authorized by the vendor to respond to any inquiries by the Department concerning the confidential status of the materials.

Any bid proposal submitted which contains confidential information must be conspicuously marked as containing confidential information, and each page upon which confidential information appears must be conspicuously marked as containing confidential information. Identification of the entire bid proposal as confidential may be deemed non-responsive and disqualify the vendor.

If the vendor designates any portion of the RFP as confidential, the vendor must submit one copy of the bid proposal from which the confidential information has been excised. This excised copy is in addition to the number of copies requested in section 4 of this RFP. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the bid proposal as possible.

The Department will treat the information marked confidential as confidential information to the extent such information is determined confidential under Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other applicable law by a court of competent jurisdiction.

In the event the Department receives a request for information marked confidential, written notice shall be given to the vendor seven calendar days prior to the release of the information to allow the vendor to seek injunctive relief pursuant to Section 22.8 of the Iowa Code.

The vendor's failure to request confidential treatment of material will be deemed by the Department as a waiver of any right to confidentiality, which the vendor may have had.

## **2.17 Copyrights**

By submitting a bid proposal, the vendor agrees that the Department may copy the bid proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation of the bid proposal or to respond to requests for public records. The vendor consents to such copying

by submitting a bid proposal and warrants that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party. The Department shall have the right to use ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in the bid proposals.

The Department will reserve all copyrights to products and materials developed through this project.

## **2.18 Release of Claims**

By submitting a bid proposal, the vendor agrees that it will not bring any claim or cause of action against the Department based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided herein or concerning the Department's failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the vendor with pertinent information as intended by this RFP.

## **2.19 Evaluation of Bid Proposals Submitted**

Bid proposals that are timely submitted and are not subject to disqualification will be reviewed in accordance with Section 5 of the RFP. The Department will not necessarily award any contract resulting from this RFP to the vendor offering the lowest cost to the Department. Instead, the Department will award the contract to the compliant vendor whose proposal receives the most points in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in section 5 of this RFP and subject to approval of the Department.

## **2.20 Award Notice and Acceptance Period**

Notice of intent to award the contract will be sent by email to all vendors submitting a timely bid proposal. Negotiation and execution of the contract shall be completed no later than **July 14, 2008**. If the apparent successful vendor fails to negotiate and deliver an executed contract by **August 1, 2008**, the Department may cancel the award and award the contract to the next highest ranked vendor.

## **2.21 Definition of Contract**

The full execution of a written contract shall constitute the making of a contract for services and no vendor shall acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until the contract has been fully executed by the successful vendor and the Department.

## **2.22 Choice of Law and Forum**

This RFP and the resulting contract are to be governed by the laws of the state of Iowa. Changes in applicable laws and rules may affect the award process or the resulting contract. Vendors are responsible for ascertaining pertinent legal

requirements and restrictions. Any and all litigation or actions commenced in connection with this RFP shall be brought in the appropriate Iowa forum.

## **2.23 Restrictions on Gifts and Activities**

Iowa Code Chapter 68B restricts gifts which may be given or received by state employees and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with state government. Vendors are responsible to determine the applicability of this Chapter to their activities and to comply with the requirements. In addition, pursuant to Iowa Code section 722.1, it is a felony offense to bribe or attempt to bribe a public official.

## **SECTION 3 SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) included a requirement that students who are visually impaired and students who are print disabled receive their textbooks and core instructional materials in specialized formats at the same time as their non-disabled peers.

The 2006 regulations implementing the 2004 IDEA include directions on how states and local districts are to respond to this legislation. The two sections of this legislation are the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center (NIMAC). Providing accessible formats in a timely manner is not a new requirement. The new NIMAS process will improve this process for the students covered under these regulations.

The NIMAS establishes standards to be used by textbook publishers to prepare electronic files of textbooks, which can be converted to specialized formats. Specialized formats means Braille, Audio, Large Print, Text to Speech or Digital Text, which can be used by students who are blind, vision impaired, physically disabled, and reading disabled. The NIMAC's duties are to receive and maintain a catalog of these electronic files. Publishers at the direction of local school districts send these files to NIMAC. When a student in a local school district requires one of these specialized formats to have access to the general education curriculum, the local district will contact an Authorized User designated by the State of Iowa to search the NIMAC for the particular textbook and associated materials. The Authorized User can access the electronic file and convert it into the specialized format requested or identify an Accessible Media Producer to convert the file into the specialized format. Once the specialized format has been converted, the Authorized User will send it to the local district making the initial request.

### **3.21 Scope of Work**

The following actions and products will be required:

The following actions and products will be required:

1. The contractor shall assist bureau staff in development of a graphic identity for the AIM (assistive technology, universal design for learning, NIMAS, accessible instructional materials) project. Elements of this graphic identity shall include but not be limited to: Logo, graphic standards, key message points, tag line, and other items as identified.
2. The contractor shall assist bureau staff in developing the core messages to be used with the identified target audiences. Target audiences include: AEA & LEA administrators, teachers of the visually impaired, AT Liaisons, AEA staff, IEP Team members, textbook publishers, parents, and advocacy groups.
3. The contractor shall assist bureau staff in identifying and developing unique communication products which suit the target audiences and the key messages to be delivered. Elements shall include but are not limited to: Bookmarks, brochures, PowerPoint's, fact sheets, webinars, podcasts, DVDs, and other products to be identified.
4. The contractor shall assist bureau staff in developing an evaluation plan to judge the effectiveness of the individual communication strategies and products.

Total cost of all activities and products shall not exceed **\$125,000**.

Start Date: **August 15, 2008**

Completion Date: **March 15, 2009**

## **SECTION 4 FORMAT AND CONTENT OF BID PROPOSALS**

### **4.1 Instructions**

These instructions prescribe the format and content of the bid proposal. They are designed to facilitate a uniform review process. Failure to adhere to the proposal format may result in the disqualification of the bid proposal.

- 4.1.1** The bid proposal shall be a word-processed document on 8.5" x 11" paper (one side only).
- 4.1.2** The bid proposal shall be divided into two parts: (1) the Technical Proposal and (2) the Cost Proposal. The bid proposal shall be sealed in an envelope. If multiple envelopes for each bid proposal are used, the envelopes shall be numbered in the following fashion: 1 of 4, 2 of 4, etc. The envelopes shall be labeled with the following information:

***RFP Title***

***Agency's Address***

***Vendor's Name and Address***

- 4.1.3** One (1) original and four (4) copies of the bid proposal, each in a sealed envelope, shall be timely submitted to the Issuing Officer. Vendors providing electronic bid proposals shall submit one paper copy as specified in section 2.7.

### **4.2 Technical Proposal**

The following documents and responses shall be included in the bid proposal in the order given below:

#### **4.2.1 Transmittal Letter**

An individual authorized to legally bind the vendor shall sign the transmittal letter. The letter shall include the vendor's mailing address, electronic mail address, fax number, and telephone number.

Any request for confidential treatment of information shall be included in the transmittal letter in addition to the specific statutory basis supporting the request and an explanation why disclosure of the information is not in the best interest of the public. The transmittal letter shall also contain the name, address and

telephone number of the individual authorized to respond to the Agency about the confidential nature of the information.

#### **4.2.2 Table of contents**

The vendor shall include a table of contents of its bid proposal.

#### **4.2.3 Executive Summary**

The vendor shall prepare an executive summary and overview of the services it is offering, including all of the following information:

**4.2.3.1** Statements that demonstrate that the vendor understands and agrees with the terms and conditions of the RFP and the proposed contract.

**4.2.3.2** An overview of the vendor's plans for the plan's four components  
:

#### **4.2.4 Service Requirements**

The vendor shall address each service requirement in Section 3 of the RFP and explain how it plans to approach each requirement. Proposals must be fully responsive to service requirements. Merely repeating the requirements will be considered non-responsive and may disqualify the vendor. Proposals must identify any deviations from the requirements of this RFP or requirements the vendor cannot satisfy. Any deviations from the requirements of the RFP or any requirement of the RFP that the vendor cannot satisfy may disqualify the vendor.

#### **4.2.5 Background Information**

The vendor shall provide the following general background information:

**4.2.5.1** Name, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the vendor including all d/b/a's or assumed names or other operating names of the vendor.

**4.2.5.2** Form of business entity, i.e., corporation, partnership, proprietorship, Limited Liability Company.

**4.2.5.3** State of incorporation, state of formation, or state of organization.

**4.2.5.4** Identity and specify the location(s) and telephone numbers of the major offices and other facilities that relate to the vendor's performance under the terms of this RFP.



#### **4.2.6 Experience**

The vendor must provide the following information regarding its experience:

- 4.2.6.1**        Number of years in business.
- 4.2.6.2**        Number of years experience with providing the types of services sought by the RFP.
- 4.2.6.3**        Describe the level of technical experience in providing the types of services sought by the RFP.
- 4.2.6.4**        List all services similar to those sought by this RFP that the vendor has provided to other businesses or governmental entities.
- 4.2.6.5**        Letters of reference from three (3) previous clients knowledgeable of the vendor's performance in providing services similar to the services described in this RFP and a contact person and telephone number for each reference.

#### **4.2.7 Personnel**

The vendor must provide resumes for all key personnel, including the project manager, who will be involved in providing the services contemplated by this RFP. The following information must be included in the resumes:

- 4.2.7.1**        Full name.
- 4.2.7.2**        Education.
- 4.2.7.3**        Years of experience and employment history particularly as it relates to the scope of services specified herein.

#### **4.2.8 Terminations, Litigation, Debarment**

The vendor must provide the following information:

- 4.2.8.1**        During the last five (5) years, has the vendor had a contract for services terminated for any reason? If so, provide full details related to the termination.

- 4.2.8.2** During the last five (5) years, describe any damages or penalties of anything of value traded or given up by the vendor under any of its existing or past contracts as it relates to services performed that are similar to the services contemplated by this RFP and the resulting Contract. If so, indicate the reason for the penalty or exchange of property or services and the estimated account of the cost of that incident to the vendor.
- 4.2.8.3** During the last five (5) years, describe any damages or penalties or anything of value traded or given up by vendor under any of its existing or past contracts as it relates to services performed that are similar to the services contemplated by this RFP. If so, indicate the reason for the penalty or exchange of property or services and the estimated amount of the cost of that incident to the vendor.
- 4.2.8.4** During the last five (5) years, describe any order, judgment or decree of any Federal or State authority barring, suspending or otherwise limiting the right of the vendor to engage in any business, practice or activity.
- 4.2.8.5** During the last five (5) years, list and summarize pending or threatened litigation, administrative or regulatory proceedings, or similar matters that could affect the ability of the vendor to perform the required services. The vendor must also state whether it or any owners, officers, or primary partners have ever been convicted of a felony. Failure to disclose these matters may result in rejection of the bid proposal or in termination of any subsequent contract. This is a continuing disclosure requirement. Any such matter commencing after submission of a bid proposal, and with respect to the successful vendor after the execution of a contract, must be disclosed in a timely manner in a written statement to the Agency.

#### **4.2.9 Proposal Certification**

The vendor shall sign and submit with the bid proposal the document included as Attachment #2 in which the vendor shall certify that the contents of the bid proposal are true and accurate.

#### **4.2.10 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

The vendor shall specifically agree that the bid proposal is predicated upon the acceptance of all terms and conditions stated in the RFP. If the vendor objects to any term or condition, the vendor must specifically refer to the RFP page, and section. Objections or responses that materially alter the RFP may be deemed non-responsive and disqualify the vendor.

#### **4.2.11 Certification of Independence and No Conflict of Interest**

The vendor shall sign and submit with the bid proposal the document included as Attachment #3 in which the vendor shall certify that it developed the bid proposal independently. The vendor shall also certify that no relationship exists or will exist during the contract period between the vendor and the Agency that interferes with fair competition or is a conflict of interest. The Agency reserves the right to reject a bid proposal or cancel the award if, in its sole discretion, any relationship exists that could interfere with fair competition or conflict with the interests of the Agency.

#### **4.2.12 Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion—Lower Tier Covered Transactions**

The vendor shall sign and submit with the bid proposal the document included as Attachment #4 in which the vendor shall certify that it is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal, department or agency.

#### **4.2.13 Authorization to Release Information**

The vendor shall sign and submit with the bid proposal the document included as Attachment #5 in which the vendor authorizes the release of information to the Agency.

#### **4.2.14 Firm Bid Proposal Terms**

The vendor shall guarantee in writing the availability of the services offered and that all bid proposal terms, including price, will remain firm a minimum of **90** days following the deadline for submitting proposals.

#### **4.2.15 Certification Regarding Sales and Use Tax**

The Contractor shall sign and submit with the Bid Proposal the document included as Attachment #6 (Tax Certification Letter) regarding collection of sales and use tax.

### **4.3 Cost Proposal**

The vendor shall provide its cost proposal for the proposed services. The cost proposal shall include the following:

#### **Cost Proposal Worksheet**

Provide cost information on the worksheet below. Use additional pages for the detail information requested. The amounts reflected should exclude state and federal taxes except for taxes required to be withheld for employment purposes. The Agency is a tax exempt entity.

- Personnel Costs
- Indicate number of time units and cost per unit
- Travel
- Communication
- Supplies
- Other



## **Section 5    Evaluation of Bid Proposals**

### **5.1            Introduction**

This section describes the evaluation process that will be used to determine which bid proposal provides the greatest benefits to the Agency. The evaluation process is designed to award the contract not necessarily to the vendor of least cost, but rather to the vendor with the best combination of attributes to perform the required services.

### **5.2            Evaluation Committee**

The Agency intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair and impartial evaluation of bid proposals received in response to this RFP. The Agency will use an Evaluation Committee to review and evaluate the proposals.

### **5.3            Evaluation Criteria**

#### **Initial Review:**

- 1. Applicant submitted proposal by the due date and time specified in the RFP? Yes/No**
- 2. Applicant submitted one original and four copies of the proposal? Yes/No**
- 3. Proposal contained two sections: Technical and Cost? Yes/No**
- 4. Proposal was within the budget amount allocated? Yes/No**
- 5. Applicant submitted at least three letters of reference? Yes/No**
- 6. Applicant provided resumes for all key personnel including project manager? Yes/No**

#### **Technical and Cost Review Aligned with Workscope**

- 1. The applicant shall assist bureau staff in development of a graphic identity for the AIM Project.**

**1 point – repeated RFP language, no new information presented**

**3 points – Proposal included language that indicated that the applicant went to the three websites listed in the RFP for guidance in developing the proposal; the proposal addressed some of the items and provided insights to the development of some items**

**5 points – Proposal indicated that applicant went to the three websites listed in the RFP for guidance; the proposal addressed all items and provided insights to the development of all items**

**2. The applicant shall assist bureau staff in developing the core messages to be used with target audiences.**

**1 point – repeated RFP language, no new information presented**

**3 points – identified suggested core messages for some not all of the targeted audiences**

**5 points – identified suggested core messages for each target audience listed**

**3. The applicant shall assist bureau staff in identifying and developing unique communication products for each target audience.**

**1 point – repeated RFP language, no new information presented**

**3 points – identified some products which could be used with some target audiences**

**5 points – identified multiple products which could be used with all target audiences; provided rationale for these suggestions**

**4. The applicant shall assist bureau staff in developing an evaluation plan to judge the effectiveness of these communication strategies and products.**

**1 point – repeated RFP language, no new information presented**

**3 points – identified evaluation strategies for some of the products**

**5 points – identified evaluation strategies for all of the products**

**5. Applicant included realistic and achievable timelines with budget figures aligned to each component of the workscope.**

**1 point – generic timelines and minimal budget figures**

**3 points – timelines and budget figures were realistic and achievable**

**5 points – realistic and achievable timelines; budget figures aligned to workscope**

#### **5.4 Evaluation Process**

**INDIVIDUAL SCORING: The evaluation committee will be composed of three members from the Department staff. Evaluation committee members are provided with copies of each RFP to begin their individual review of the proposals.**

Step One: Review all proposals. **Take notes, make comments or prepare questions for discussion. Do not necessarily score at this point.**

Step Two: Score proposals. Score proposals based on the criteria established in the RFP. Proposals must be evaluated solely on the stated criteria listed in the RFP. Prior experience with the product and/or applicant cannot be considered in scoring the proposals. A custom scoring sheet shall be provided to assist in the process of awarding and totaling points.

Step Three: Once the proposals have been evaluated and scored by individual committee members, the entire committee shall meet to discuss the proposals and arrive at the final scoring. The committee chairperson, or assigned designee, shall take minutes of each meeting. These minutes may include the date, time, place of meeting, and a list of the evaluation committee members in attendance, as well as the substance of all matters discussed or decided and, at the request of any evaluation committee member, a record by individual members of any votes taken. A quorum of the committee must be present to take any official action. **The full evaluation committee should discuss all aspects of the proposals so that there is a “unified understanding” of the criteria and corresponding responses. Any individual scores may be adjusted at this point based upon discussion. The committee shall tally the final point assignments by total of all of the points given by individual committee members.**

Step Four: The full evaluation committee makes a written recommendation to the agency director as to whom the contract should be awarded. This written recommendation should contain scores, justification and rationale for the decision, along with any other variables that may have been considered.

Department of Education will issue the required **Intent to Award** and, assuming no appeal; will issue a purchase order or vendor contract, as appropriate. A copy of the fully executed contract will be retained in Department of Education file. This completes the RFP solicitation process.



## Section 6 Contract Terms and Conditions

### 6.1 Contract Terms and Conditions

The contract that the Agency expects to award as a result of this Request for Proposal will be based upon the bid proposal submitted by the successful vendor and this solicitation. The contract between the Agency and the successful vendor shall be a combination of the specifications, terms and conditions of the Request for Proposal, including the terms contained in Attachment #1, the offer of the vendor contained in the technical and cost proposals, written clarifications or changes made in accordance with the provisions herein, and any other terms deemed necessary by the Agency.

The contract terms contained in Attachment #1 are not intended to be a complete listing of all contract terms but are provided only to enable vendors to better evaluate the costs associative with the RFP and the potential resulting contract. Vendors should plan on such terms being included in any contract awarded as a result of this RFP. All costs associated with complying with these requirements should be included in the revenue proposal or any pricing quoted by the vendor.

By submitting a proposal, each vendor acknowledges its acceptance of these specifications, terms and conditions without change except as otherwise expressly stated in its proposal. If a vendor takes exception to a provision, it must state the reason for the exception and set forth in its proposal the specific contract language it proposes to include in place of the provision. Exceptions that materially change these terms or the requirements of the RFP may be deemed non-responsive by the Agency, in its sole discretion, resulting in possible disqualification of the proposal. The Agency reserves the right to either award a contract without further negotiation with the successful vendor or to negotiate contract terms with the selected vendor if the best interests of the Agency would be served.

### 6.2 Contract Length

The term of the contract will commence on **August 15, 2008** and end on **March 15, 2009**.

**Attachment #1**  
**Contract Terms and Conditions**

Agreement # \_\_\_\_\_

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN

STATE OF IOWA, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, (DE) Bureau/Division of \_\_\_\_\_  
Grimes State Office Bldg., 400 E 14<sup>th</sup> St, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146.  
Department Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (515) \_\_\_\_\_

AND

CONTRACTING PARTY - AGENCY OR INDIVIDUAL: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

AGENCY CONTACT PERSON OR AGENCY PERSON TO PERFORM SERVICES: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTRACTING PARTY: IF AN INDIVIDUAL, YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
IF AN AGENCY, YOUR FEIN NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

THE DEPARTMENT WILL COMPENSATE FOR THE FOLLOWING SERVICES RENDERED BY CONTRACTING PARTY:  
(DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES) \_\_\_\_\_

CONTRACT PERIOD: Service begins: \_\_\_\_\_ Service ends: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPENSATION: As indicated and in accordance with the stated terms below.

Contract is for actual costs estimated as shown here in total and itemized below under "Associated Costs" section.

Contract is for a specified fee totaling the shown amount for \_\_\_\_\_ (Number) \_\_\_\_\_ (Units) at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ (Unit)

\$0.00

CONTRACT IS NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT SHOWN ON THIS LINE.

ASSOCIATED COSTS: Only the items designated are covered; required documentation is indicated under "Other Conditions and Requirements" section. (Estimated costs shown)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ TRAVEL: FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_ AND RETURN

via means and for the amounts shown:

Air Coach \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Auto \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Taxi \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Parking \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (As stipulated in "Description of Services" section.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ MEALS: Actual and necessary; not to exceed the following rates:

Breakfast \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ LODGING: Number of nights \_\_\_\_\_, not to exceed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per night, plus tax.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER: (ITEMIZE) \_\_\_\_\_

CLAIM/PAYMENT PROVISIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment requests should be submitted to the attention of: \_\_\_\_\_

\*FOR DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION USE ONLY\*

*FOR DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION USE ONLY*							PAYMENTS
FUND	AGENCY	ORGN	S/ORG	OBJ	PROG	AMOUNT	
	0282						
	0282						
	0282						
	0282						
TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT						\$0.00	
PRE-CONTRACT (ATTACHED OR N/A)		SOLE SOURCE (ATTACHED OR N/A)		PRIOR APPROVAL (ATTACHED OR N/A)			

OTHER CONDITIONS/REQUIREMENTS: Unless otherwise stipulated, the rates and requirements listed below shall apply:

Mileage reimbursement rate: 34¢ per mile.

Original Receipts: Must be submitted with a signed claim when the contract is with an individual. Receipts are required for the following: (Credit card receipts are not acceptable)

TRAVEL: Air coach, taxi fares, related parking fees and car rental.

LODGING: Reimbursement approved only for those residing outside the designated meeting site. Lodging must be outside contracting party's domicile.

OTHER: Registration fees and other items (as designated under "Associated Costs" section) require receipts unless specified otherwise.

Itemized Invoice: An agency must submit an itemized invoice detailing the expenses allowed by the contract.

ALL CLAIMS MUST BE FILED WITHIN 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THE CONTRACT SERVICE ENDING DATE.

TERMINATION: This contract may be terminated by either party upon ten- (10) days written notice.

NONTRANSFERENCE: Unless otherwise stipulated in this contract, the contracting party shall not transfer any interest in this contract without prior written approval from the Department of Education.

AMENDMENTS: Requests for an approval of amendments to this agreement must be mutually acceptable and in writing.

INDEMNIFICATION: The contracting party agrees jointly and severally to indemnify and hold the State, its successors and assigns harmless from and against all liability, loss, damage, or expense, including reasonable counsel fees, which the State shall incur by reason of the failure of the contracting party to perform fully and comply with the terms and obligations of this agreement.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS: This contract is subject to the anticipated availability of Federal and/or State funds under the program from which it is supported.

ASSURANCE: THE CONTRACTING PARTY, BY SIGNATURE AFFIXED BELOW, ASSURES THE DEPARTMENT THAT SAID CONTRACTING PARTY IS OPERATING IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL STATUTES, RULES AND REGULATIONS. INCLUDING CERTIFICATION THAT THE CONTRACTOR AND/OR ITS PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS ARE NOT SUSPENDED OR DISBARRED.

REPRESENTATIONS: VERBAL OR WRITTEN, THAT MAY HAVE BEEN MADE PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF THIS CONTRACT AND ARE NOT EXPRESSLY STATED IN THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT, ARE NONBINDING, VOID AND OF NO EFFECT. NEITHER PARTY HAS RELIED ON SUCH PRIOR REPRESENTATIONS IN ENTERING INTO THIS CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT.

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
DE CONTACT (Requesting service) TITLE DATE

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
DE ADMINISTRATION TITLE DATE

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
CONTRACTING AGENCY OR INDIVIDUAL TITLE DATE

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
DE AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE TITLE DATE

CONTRACTING PARTY: SIGN, DATE, AND RETURN ORIGINAL COPY TO THE DEPARTMENT. THIS CONTRACT WILL BE VALID WHEN YOU RECEIVE A COPY WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE.

AGREEMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment #2

Date

Steve Maurer, Issuing Officer  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Request for Proposal ED  
PROPOSAL CERTIFICATION

Dear Mr. Maurer:

I certify that the contents of the proposal submitted on behalf of (Name of Vendor) in response to the Iowa Department of Education for Proposal Number for providing services and products for the AIM communication Plan are true and accurate. I also certify that (Name of Vendor) has not made any knowingly false statements in its proposal.

Sincerely,

---

Name and Title

### Attachment #3

Date

Steve Maurer, Issuing Officer  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Request for Proposal Number ED  
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND NO CONFLICT OF  
INTEREST

Dear Mr.Maurer:

By submitting a proposal in response to Iowa Department of Education Request for Proposal Number for development of the AIM communication Plan, the undersigned certifies the following:

1. The proposal has been developed independently, without consultation, communication or agreement with any employee or consultant to the Agency who has worked on the development of this RFP, or with any person serving as a member of the evaluation committee.
2. The proposal has been developed independently, without consultation, communication or agreement with any other vendor or parties for the purpose of restricting competition.
3. Unless otherwise required by law, the information found in the proposal has not been knowingly disclosed and will not be knowingly disclosed prior to the award of the contract, directly or indirectly, to any other vendor.
4. No attempt has been made or will be made by (Name of Vendor) to induce any other vendor to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose restricting competition.
5. No relationship exists or will exist during the contract period between (Name of Vendor) and the Agency that interferes with fair competition or as a conflict of interest.

Sincerely,

---

Name and Title

*Attachment #4*

Date

Steve Maurer, Issuing Officer  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Request for Proposal Number ED  
AIM communication Plan

Dear Mr. Ikeda:

By submitting a proposal in response to Iowa Department of Education Request for Proposal Number :AIM Communication Plan, the undersigned certifies the following:

1. I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, (Name of Vendor) and all of its principals: (a) are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by a Federal Agency or agency; (b) have not within a three year period preceding this proposal been convicted of, or had a civil judgment rendered against them from commission of fraud, or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction, violation of antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property; (c) are not presently indicted for or other criminally or civilly charged by a government entity (federal, state, or local) with the commission of any of the offenses enumerated in (b) of this certification; and (d) have not within a three year period preceding this proposal had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause.
2. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which the Agency has relied upon when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the undersigned knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available, the Agency may pursue available remedies including suspension, debarment, or termination of the contract.

Sincerely,

---

Name and Title

## Attachment #5

Date

Steve Maurer, Issuing Officer  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Request for Proposal Number ED  
AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

Dear Mr. Maurer:

**[name of vendor]** hereby authorizes the Iowa Department of Education ("Agency") to obtain information regarding its performance on other contracts, agreements or other business arrangements, its business reputation, and any other matter pertinent to evaluation and the selection of a successful vendor in response to Request for Proposal Number .

The vendor acknowledges that it may not agree with the information and opinions given by such person or entity in response to a reference request. The vendor acknowledges that the information and opinions given by such person or entity may hurt its chances to receive contract awards from the Agency or may otherwise hurt its reputation or operations. The vendor is willing to take that risk.

The vendor hereby releases, acquits and forever discharges the State of Iowa, the Agency, their officers, directors, employees and agents from any and all liability whatsoever, including all claims, demands and causes of action of every nature and kind affecting the undersigned that it may have or ever claim to have relating to information, data, opinions, and references obtained by the Agency in the evaluation and selection of a successful vendor in response to Request for Proposal Number .

The vendor authorizes representatives of the Agency to contact any and all of the persons, entities, and references which are, directly or indirectly, listed, submitted, or referenced in the undersigned's proposal submitted in response to Request for Proposal Number .

The vendor further authorizes any and all persons, entities to provide information, data, and opinions with regard to the undersigned's performance under any contract, agreement, or other business arrangement, the undersigned's ability to perform, the undersigned's business reputation, and any other matter pertinent to the evaluation of the undersigned. The undersigned hereby releases, acquits and forever discharges any such person or entity and their officers, directors, employees and agents from any and all liability whatsoever, including all claims, demands and causes of action of every nature

and kind affecting the undersigned that it may have or ever claim to have relating to information, data, opinions, and references supplied to the Agency in the evaluation and selection of a successful vendor in response to Request for Proposal Number .

A photocopy or facsimile of this signed Authorization is as valid as an original.

Sincerely,

---

Printed Name of Vendor Organization

---

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

---

Date



**Attachment #6**

Date  
Steve Maurer, Issuing Officer  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Request for Proposal Number ED-  
CERTIFICATION REGARDING REGISTRATION, COLLECTION  
AND REMISSION OF STATE SALES AND USE TAX

Dear Mr. Maurer:

Pursuant to Iowa Code sections 423.2(10) & 423.5(8) (2005 Code Sup.) - a retailer in Iowa or a retailer maintaining a business in Iowa that enters into a contract with a state agency must register, collect, remit Iowa sales tax and Iowa use tax levied under Iowa Code chapter 423 on all sales of tangible personal property and enumerated services. The Act also requires vendors to certify their compliance with sales tax registration, collection, and remission requirements and provides potential consequences if the certification is false or fraudulent.

By submitting a proposal in response to the Iowa Department of Education Request for Proposal Number for the AIM communication Plan, the undersigned certifies the following: (check the applicable box).

☐ **[Name of vendor]** is registered with the Iowa Department of Revenue, collects, and remits Iowa sales and use taxes as required by Iowa Code chapter 432; or

☐ **[Name of vendor]** is not a "retailer" or a "retailer maintaining a place of business in this state" as those terms are defined in Iowa Code subsections 423.1(42) & (43). **[Name of vendor]** also acknowledges that the Iowa Department of Education may declare the **[Name of vendor]**'s bid or resulting contract void if the above certification is false. The **[Name of vendor]** also understands that fraudulent certification may result in the Iowa Department of Education or its representative filing for damages for breach of contract.

Sincerely,

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Name and Title